

# Agricultural Management Assistance Program

2009 FACT SHEET



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources  
Conservation Service  
New Jersey

The Agricultural Management Assistance program (AMA) is a voluntary program only available in sixteen states. In New Jersey, the program specifically targets beginning and limited resource farmers, small farms, and producers who have had limited participation in other USDA financial assistance programs.

Applicants must have current crop and producer records on file with USDA's Farm Service Agency. They must own or control the land, agree to implement specific eligible conservation practices according to the contract schedule, and qualify for farmland assessment. In addition, applicants must meet at least 3 of the 6 criteria (listed below) to be eligible for the program in New Jersey.

The criteria for AMA are:

1. Average annual gross farm sales \$75,000 or less for the last three years
2. Total farm acreage of less than 50 of specialty/vegetable crops/pasture OR less than 200 of any other crops
3. USDA program payments less than \$10,000 (total) over the last five years
4. Production income more than 75% of the total household income (for the previous tax year)
5. Farm Operating Loan (private or government) used to support the beginning farm operation within the last 10 years
6. Rented acreage totals more than 50% of the total production acreage of the farm



## What Practices Can Receive Funding?

New Jersey has developed program categories around the five national priority areas for the AMA program. Practices may address more than one national priority.

Category	Eligible Practices on Cropland	Eligible Practices on Grazing Land
Reduction in non-point source pollutants	Cover Crop, Field Border, Filter Strip, Nutrient Management, Pest Management, Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat	Stream Crossing, Access Control, Livestock Watering System, Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat Supporting practices: Fence, Pipeline, Well
Irrigation water use efficiency	Irrigation Systems (Micro-irrigation or Sprinkler), Irrigation Water Management Supporting practices: Irrigation Water Pipe	
Reduction in particulate or ozone precursor emissions	Cover Crop, Nutrient Management, Pest Management, Windbreak Establishment	Renewable power source for Livestock Watering System, Prescribed Grazing, Windbreak Establishment
Reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation	Cover Crop, Nutrient Management, Residue Management (No Till)	Animal Trails and Walkways, Pasture Planting, Prescribed Grazing
Promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation	Conservation Cover, Field Border, Filter Strip, Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat, Windbreak Establishment	Riparian Forest Buffer, Riparian Herbaceous Habitat, Windbreak Establishment



## How Does Signup for AMA Work?

Interested applicants can review the program information available at [www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ama](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ama), and should request a new or updated conservation plan for their farm. A signed application can be filed with the local NRCS office at any time.

Applications are grouped for ranking normally once a year. A contract offer is developed based on the conservation plan, and is ranked on how well the proposed practices meet national, state, and local environmental objectives, as well as their cost-efficiency.

The state objectives of the AMA program in NJ include environmental risk factors of the applicant land area, such as distance to bodies of water and pollution potential from nutrients leaching into groundwater.

## What are the Payment Rates and Terms?

There is a statutory annual program payment limitation of \$50,000 per person per year. However, New Jersey has capped the total amount awarded in a contract in 2009 to \$35,000, due to limited program funding.

Individual practice payment rates are calculated at between 50% and 75% of the typical cost of implementing the practice in New Jersey. Projected payments in the approved conservation program contract are based on practice extent and not cost. Payments are made after conservation practices are fully implemented.

Producers may contribute to the cost of a practice through in-kind sources, including personal or donated labor and use of personal equipment, as long as the value of the contribution is documented.

## For More Information or to Sign Up, Contact Your Local USDA Service Center:

*Burlington, Camden and Ocean counties*

### **Columbus Service Center**

1971 Jacksonville-Jobstown Rd

Telephone: (609) 267-1639

*Mercer, Middlesex and Monmouth counties*

### **Freehold Service Center**

4000 Kozloski Road

Telephone: (732) 462-0075

*Hunterdon, Somerset and Union counties*

### **Frenchtown Service Center**

687 Pittstown Rd Suite 2

Telephone: (908) 782-4614

*Bergen, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties*

### **Hackettstown Service Center**

Bldg #1, 101 Bilby Road

Telephone: (908) 852-2576

*Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties*

### **Vineland Service Center**

1317 South Main Rd. Bldg 3

Telephone: (856) 205-1225

*Gloucester and Salem counties*

### **Woodstown Service Center**

51 Cheney Road, Suite 2

Telephone: (856) 769-1126



*Filter strips and field borders capture nutrients and sediment, and can provide important habitat for pollinators*



*A pest management program can reduce energy use on the farm, saving trips across the field, time and money*



*Proper livestock grazing provides better nutrition, and reduces disease, runoff and soil compaction, all at a lower cost*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

3/6/09